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FM AMEMBASSY BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3618
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN 000583

SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR IO/UNP AND EAP/MTS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/15/2016

TAGS: PHUM PREL BX

SUBJECT: BRUNEI LIKELY TO JOIN NAM ON UN HR RESOLUTIONS

REF: A. SECSTATE 187018

1B. STATE 184178

1C. STATE 182267

1D. STATE 184156

Classified By: CDA Justin Friedman, reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

11. (C) Charge delivered ref B & C demarches on November 9 to Florence Chong, Assistant Director of the International Organizations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT). Chong explained that Brunei regularly joins with consensus positions adopted by ASEAN, the OIC and the NAM. She said that Brunei generally opposes single country resolutions and votes in favor of no action motions and would likely stick with NAM positions when these resolutions come up for vote.

12. (C) On the specific five country resolutions, Chong said that MOFAT was having difficulty getting draft texts with sufficient lead time to analyze the content, citing the Iran resolution in particular. She also said that without a text on Belarus, it was impossible to provide a response. Charge pressed that as Belarus was not an ASEAN or OIC country, Brunei should be able to join us or at least abstain on the Belarus resolution. Chong countered that as Belarus was a member of NAM, Brunei would likely follow the NAM position.

13. (C) Chong said that Myanmar had demarshaled the GoB that it had not been adequately consulted on the text of this years' the draft resolution on Burma. She added that last year's Burma resolution was adopted by consensus - a solution she hoped could be achieved this year as well.

14. (C) On Uzbekistan, Chong said that a key factor in Brunei's decision would be how the issue of the death penalty was treated in the text. Brunei has the death penalty (for drug trafficking) and would not support language in the Uzbekistan resolution taking a position on Uzbekistan's use of the death penalty. Chong did not offer any comments on the DPRK resolution.

15. (C) On November 15, Charge followed up with Chong per ref A instructions on the importance of voting against the three anti-U.S. resolutions. Chong again complained of not having a draft of the text to review. Charge noted the timing of the coming vote and urged a timely review so that Brunei could vote against these resolutions.

FRIEDMAN